

# Indiana House of Representatives

## News and Information

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### **HOUSE GOP REJECTS KERSEY PLAN TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana House Republicans today turned back an effort by State Rep. Clyde Kersey (D-Terre Haute) that would have allowed Hoosiers greater access to more affordable prescription drugs.

The House majority rejected an amendment offered by Kersey that would have enabled the state of Indiana to participate in I-SaveRx, a program that enables consumers to purchase safe and affordable prescription refills from licensed, inspected pharmacies in Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Kersey was attempting to attach the amendment to House Bill 1745, which dealt with wholesale drug distribution. The legislator said that measure provided a perfect vehicle for the latest effort in his campaign to provide Hoosiers with the best health care at the lowest possible cost.

"This program was initiated in the state of Illinois and is currently also available to residents of Wisconsin, Kansas and Missouri," Kersey said. "Participants in I-SaveRx have been able to purchase medication refills in three month supplies at savings of up to 50 percent. It allows people to take advantage of lower prescription drug prices that are offered in other countries, without having to take a trip across the border."

Those who qualify for the program would be able to order their prescription drugs over the telephone. The medications would be delivered to a person's home, saving money and trips to the pharmacy.

"In the states that have adopted this program, I-SaveRx has garnered huge acclaim," Kersey noted. "A stringent system of quality controls and multiple safety checks help ensure that drugs are safe. Pharmacies that take part in the program are inspected and approved by state regulatory agencies. Many of the concerns expressed about other efforts to go to other countries to get affordable drugs are answered here."

For Kersey, I-SaveRx would provide a perfect complement to a state law he authored in 2004 that created two types of aggregate drug purchasing programs that are designed to give people greater access to those items.

One of those programs enables the state to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies to purchase prescription drugs for state employees at reduced prices. The other enables Indiana to join forces with other states to form purchasing compacts that will have the ability to negotiate lower drug costs.

"Going into the 2005 session, I had hoped to expand the scope of that program to include seniors and other groups of people who are having trouble fitting the costs of these drugs into their limited incomes," Kersey said. "However, it is apparent that the House majority was not interested in pursuing that plan, and it appears that after today's vote, they are not interested in joining other states in a program that enables us to purchase safe drugs at reasonable prices.

"Rest assured that I will make every effort through the rest of this session to give Hoosiers the chance to purchase affordable drugs," he concluded.

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